THE

TOWN-COUNCIL.

A POEM.

Regulus K

Ecce iterum Criſpinus! JUV.
——————quis talia fando,
Temperet a lachrymis? et jam nox humida cœlo
Præcipitat, ſuadentque cadentia ſidera ſomnos.
VIRG.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

To Sir ——— ———, Bart.

Let gallows gape for dog, let man go free.

SHAKE. HENRY V.

WORTHY SIR,

THE many eminent ſervices you have rendered to your country in every capacity in which ſhe has had the good fortune to employ you; your many amiable and private virtues as a Gentleman; and, in particular, the great regard you have always ſhown to the intereſt of the great city you repreſented in laſt Parliament, not any pecuniary motives, induce me to ſolicit your patronage to the following Eſſay, which the Author humbly preſents as a ſmall inſtance of his regard. ——

An attempt to enumerate the many good offices you have done the State, at the ſame time that it would offend your innate modeſty, is a taſk to which the Author is altogether unequal.

When contractor for the army in the 1745, your conduct and management endeared you to all parties: For, not only was the army well ſupplied with all neceſſaries, but the farmers, who brought, perhaps, their whole ſtock of grain and

cattle

cattle to you and your worthy colleague, were ſatisfied, and paid to the laſt farthing. You did not, as other Commiſſaries have done, drive them away, and threaten to hang them up as rebels when they ſought their money; nor is it in the leaſt true, that you carried about a gallows with you for that purpoſe—All the money you got then was fairly and honeſtly acquired.

However, this was but a ſmall teſtimony of your regard for your country.—In the laſt war you had a larger field, and performed accordingly. By your wiſe and diſintereſted conduct, you added at leaſt Three Millions to the riches of the kingdom. How do we admire the conduct of a certain Roman Commiſſary, who kept back the waggons which contained proviſions, and ſtarved the army for three days!—— This was at once the greateſt inſtance of humanity and œconomy ever recorded. He did not, as ſome other Commiſſaries whom I could name, in our own time, have done, charge theſe three days in his accounts.—No—they were a ſaving to the ſtate.—But, notwithſtanding this proof of his honeſty, and zeal for his country, the miſguided army would have deſtroyed him. Ungrateful men! they knew not their own good; they knew not their beſt benefactor; and he would certainly

certainly have fallen a victim to their abſurd rage, had he not, by an addreſs which does honour to human invention, procured a young man to father the alledged crime, who, ignorant of the conſequences, ſuffered accordingly.

The Author leaves it to the unprejudiced part of mankind to draw the parallel betwixt you and the above celebrated Commiſſary: He, for his own part, acknowledges your ſuperior merit in every reſpect. The genteel manner of your b—b—g the Pr—ce of M—KL—NB—GH, and running ſnacks with Pr—ce F—D—N—ND, will remain laſting monuments of your amazing abilities.

The Author is extremely ſorry, that after ſo many ſucceſsful proofs of your great talents, you ſhould have failed in trifling matters.—How could you intruſt your hitherto unſullied reputation in the art of c—r—pt—n, in the hands of that weak, ſhuffling, ſhivering, creeping creature H—T!—But as theſe letters, which that negligent *thing* has loſt, or given up (no matter which), are wrote in a maſterly ſtyle, and no doubt contain a complete ſyſtem of b—b—y, the Author hopes, for your honour and the benefit of mankind, to ſee them all ſoon publiſhed.

Upon

Upon the whole, from the inſtances already given, the Author is confident you had always the intereſt and welfare of your country at heart, and conſidered yourſelf only as a ſecondary cauſe in every tranſaction.—You have not amaſſed wealth, as other Commiſſaries would have done, at your country's expence; all you required was a ſmall competency, to keep you above want, and enable you ſtill to exert your *abilities* in the ſervice of your country.

The Author begs leave to congratulate you on the ſhining qualities of your ſon;—he inherits all the Father's eminent virtues;—he is by no means a BLOCKHEAD: On the contrary, unleſs the jolting of the coach jumble his brains betwixt his own houſe and Weſtminſter-hall, the Author is credibly informed he will be able to pronounce *Aye* or *No* very diſtinctly.——Therefore, with the greateſt veneration for his *ponderous* talents, and your known and confeſt abilities, the Author ſubſcribes himſelf,

WORTHY SIR,

Your moſt obedient humble ſervant,

REGULUS.

THE

TOWN-COUNCIL.

BARREN the Bards who do the Muſes tune,
On New-Year's day (no more), and fourth of June;
Whoſe daſtard ſouls do proſtitute their pen,
For private views, to flatter guilty men;
Whoſe daily bread depends on Falſehood's tongue,
Whoſe future names on Birth-day Odes are hung:
Not ſo the honeſt Bard, who ever ſings
In Virtue's cauſe, regardleſs quite of Kings;
Diſdaining venal hire, he never fails
To treat men equal, merit holding ſcales;
Unwearied e'er, he watches o'er the times,
True Virtue's friend, the rooted ſcourge of crimes:

Him ſterneſt poverty can ne'er compel
To ſtoop to *greatneſs*, againſt truth rebel;
Contempt'ouſly he views with ſcornful eye
The ſplendid fool and titl'd knave paſs by;
Tho' poor he ſeem, yet in himſelf he's great,
And laughs to ſcorn a Miniſter of State.

Hence, then, thoſe ſlaves who barter common ſenſe
For ſordid traſh, buy infamy for pence;
May all they write be with themſelves forgot
To all mankind, and in their lifetime rot!

Come, ſatire powerful! aid the Muſe's rhimes
With all your mighty force, to laſh the times!
Drag out each v——n from his lurking hole,
Record each ſpotted name, each guilty ſoul,
To ages down; that villains yet unborn,
Viewing 't with hate, may turn away in ſcorn,
And, if not real friends to virtue's cauſe,
At leaſt may feign to keep her ſacred laws.

In this abandon'd age, when vice is priz'd,
When virtue's laugh'd at, real worth deſpis'd;

When

When titl'd wretches lord it o'er the globe,
Taking baſe refuge in their purpl'd robe,
EDINA mourns her lamentable fate,
Her rulers corrupt as their pow'rs are great;
Mourn ſure ſhe muſt, that an ignoble head
Should dictate to the reſt the paths they tread.

What means my Muſe, and whither tends all this?
Did not ſhe whiſper ſomething done amiſs?
She did indeed—I quickly took the hint
At her deſire, and give it now in print.

Not diſtant far, (no matter when or where,
Whether in Writers' Court, or Andrew's Square),
Within a cave (where knaves and ruffians meet,
Where bribes and perjury take up their ſeat),
There throngs a motely crew, (ſuch ne'er diſgrac'd
A kingdom's capital, or e'er were plac'd
In magiſterial chair)—there they debate,
Plan all that's helliſh; there they meditate
Their damned ſchemes againſt Edina's laws,
Whilſt the curs'd cave reſounds with their applauſe.
Here, at the dead and ſilent hour of night,
They plann'd Edina's ruin with delight;

Here did they ſign a mean and grov'ling ſcroll;
A ſcroll as mean and grov'ling as their ſoul;
Three only from the herd were found to ſtand,
In freedom's cauſe, againſt the venal band.
Accurs'd the day this city ſhould be rul'd
By upſtart k——s, by ev'ry muſhroom fool'd!
Shall ST—D—T, S—MP—N, or ſhall men like theſe
Pretend to wear a royal city's bays?
Men who ariſe, and with the rapid year
Inſtant are fled, for ever diſappear.

Not long ago, ſtill to appointments true,
Within the cave (their uſual rendezvous)
They met again, carous'd, and roar'd aloud,
Till, with a downcaſt look, from 'midſt the croud
S—MP—N appear'd—to damp their joyous mirth—
All knew him well, and all confeſt his worth;
A pleas'd attention on each viſage hung,
To hear inſtructions from his fawning tongue;
A ſilent plaudit through the cavern ran,
Whilſt thus the darling fiend addreſs'd the clan:
" No more ſhall mirth; no more, my well lov'd boys!
" Shall this ſad cave reſound with midnight noiſe;

" No

" No longer now ſhall your glad hearts purſue
" The thieving, bribing plan each had in view,
" Bemoan our fate is all we now can do.
" Here muſt we ſtay forſaken and alone,
" Our great, our worthy patron is undone;
" How ſad the tale!—Sir L——CE' cauſe is gone!
" Lank H—T, like Judas, has his maſter ſold;
" But who can ſtand th' alluring power of gold?
" In him we loſe our chief, our main ſupport,
" The great protector of this midnight court."—
S—MP—N here ended—kindl'd with diſdain,
Inflam'd with wrath, unable to reſtrain
His boiling rage, up ſtarted fierce a k——e
(Who ne'er to Virtue's rules had been a ſlave),
L—R—E yelep'd, who not a jot behind
S—MP—N his bold compeer, thus op'd his mind:
" Why, if D—D—s has fail'd, ſhould we lament,
" Tho' he was fit for ev'ry vile intent;
" Tho' he maintain'd with diabolic ſkill
" The Quebec Act, and eke the Mortmain Bill;
" We have in ſtricteſt ſenſe our duty done,
" Defy'd all ſhame, outſtar'd the mid-day ſun.

" Was not the whole (without the ſmalleſt ſpark
" Of modeſty) tranſacted in the dark?
" *Scorning to mince damnation, and too proud,*
" *To hide the works of darkneſs in a cloud,*
" Did we not ſhow that vice maintains her ſway
" In all we do, in open face of day?
" Did not our friend 'gainſt brib'ry take the oath?
" Nay gulp'd it down, juſt like a meſs of broth.
" But hark'ee TOM! perhaps had I been there,
" I might have told (then whiſper'd in his ear),
" You have from me one hundred pounds a-year."
At this ſad whiſper S—MP—N ſtorm'd and ſwore,
" I have, ſince DR—M—ND died, like Atlas bore
" Your ſinking city's weight; nay I for thee
" Got all thou haſt; and would'ſt thou grudge to me
" That louſy hundred?—But to make amends,
" Be only ſilent, we may yet be friends;
" Yet one word more, by Jove! I'll tell it round,
" How to avoid the oath thou did'ſt abſcond;
" How I have rais'd thee up, accurs'd the hour!
" Ungrateful man! next to myſelf in power;
" Or you had ſtill (perhaps it is forgot),
" Have been a drudge, and at the lettron wrote."

Thus

Thus the two chiefs—the reſt had nought to ſay,
They cramm'd their guts, and left the Town to pay.

O poor Edina!—loſt—quite overpower'd
By worthleſs ſlaves—pick't to the bone; devour'd
By vermin, who (curſe on the nauſeous breed!)
Tear out thy entrails, glory in the deed.

DR—M—ND alas! thy mem'ry muſt be dear
To honeſt men; for ever may it wear
Thoſe praiſes which, to ſterling merit join'd,
Make us regret your loſs, curſe thoſe behind.
All future ages ſhall thy name adore;
Thy acts ſhall ſpeak when I can write no more;
The city's good (tho' fools would often blame)
Was all your wiſh, was all your zealous aim;
When raging politics perplex'd the ſtate
(And politics will ever have their weight),
You order'd all things on a ſtedfaſt plan,
Nor gave your vote till you had tried the man;
Not ſo our preſent fools, who at the beck
Of ev'ry upſtart move—ne'er dare they ſhake
Their harneſs off; like aſſes they muſt trudge
At S—MP—N's nod, without him dare not budge.

Here

Here let us view, impartial if we can,
The preſent ſet, give juſtice to each man,
If men they can be call'd, who never think
On other things (like beaſts) but meat and drink.

The firſt who ſtrikes my eye a ſhadow ſeems,
Some twenty fathoms long, with ſpider's limbs,
By head at leaſt (like Saul among the people)
Taller than all the crew—a walking ſteeple;
With bones ſo bare, his face ſo much beat out
That nature's ſelf would even make a doubt,
(All features loſt, expreſſion quite forgot,)
Whether ſhe meant it for a face or not.
Could this man think in parliament to ſhine,
This ſkin and bone, this worſt of Pharaoh's kine?
How could you S—MP—N vote a rotten plank
Like this, a man of lath, a perfect blank,
To dignities above his narrow'd views?
Enough I think he rules Edina's ſtews!—
And when he's ſeated in the Pr——t's chair,
All we can ſay, a cypher's ſtation'd there.

Next him there comes a very doubtful man,
Moulded by nature on a diff'rent plan;

This

This politician conſtantly purſues
A train of guilt; he acts with double views;
He cloſe maintains ſome creature in his place
To ſcreen his crimes, and lend his frauds a face.
He can at pleaſure make and unmake May'rs,
Can graze Conveeners, fill the Bailies' chairs,
Whilſt they (true puppets!), mock'd with empty ſtate,
Have nothing but the name of being great,
And in the council, on each council day,
Do what he bids, and what he prompts them ſay.
Not long ago (the thing is ſtrictly true)
He made them ſign a bond, and break it too;
Whate'er he ſays each ſilly fool ſubſcribes,
Whilſt he and L—R—E jointly ſhare the bribes.

L—R—E a name! O may't for ever rot!
Ungrateful man! he ſtarv'd his partner S——T;
With callous heart, to ev'ry feeling dead,
He ſaw the man who made him begging bread;
And what (tho' true) would ſtagger all belief,
He knew his wants, yet granted no relief.
In ſhort, in him all vices are engroſs'd;
To trace them out were time and labour loſt;

A trait'rous head, a heart of ranc'rous hue,
Are ſtrongly pourtray'd on his livid brow.
From theſe bright qualities he took his riſe,
Firſt as Lord Pr——t, then, to the ſurpriſe
Of all mankind, he ſtepp'd into Ex——e.

Sprung from a dunghill, comes the greateſt ſtain
E'er office had, the city's CH—B——N;
In diff'rent ſhapes this Proteus comes before ye,
Firſt as a foot-boy, now as pimp to L—R—E;
His ſcowling look points out a treach'rous ſoul;
He ſticks at nought, the means however foul—
His wicked heart is fit for any deed,
To break a friend's, or only brother's bread.

Tho' W———N in pity op'd his door
To this vile wretch, and took him in when poor,
Supplied his wants, and lent him ev'ry aid
That charity could lend, to gain him bread;
Yet did this boſom ſnake vile methods uſe
His worthy benefactor to abuſe;
All gratitude forgot, he tried with might
To rob his gen'rous maſter of his right;

A brother too could not the ſnares eſcape
Of this Belzebub in the human ſhape.
Search him quite through, one virtue you'll not find;
He's wholly black, to infamy reſign'd.
Still in the diſmal tract of vice he goes,
Nor ſmells the gallows, tho' before his noſe;
Bath'd deep in vice, and hackney'd in each ſin,
The gates of Hell muſt gape to take him in.

After theſe four come forth a diſmal knot
Of Baillies, Deacons, Couns'lors, and what not;
Like bubbles on the ſtream blown up with air,
Theſe float about a while, then diſappear;
A band of loyal patriots they are,
Of reſolution fix'd, men fit to bear
The weight of empires; men of rank and ſenſe,
Virtue and knowledge; men of eloquence.
L—TH—N, I—N—S, I'll put them in the ſcales
With G——E the Third, or LEWIS of Verſailles;
And (if 'tis true that weight preponderates)
The beam will kick, our Baillies keep their ſeats.
What has not E—D—R, what not T—T—R done?
They ne'er divide our intereſts from their own.

Witneſs

Witneſs it Heav'n! the laſt perform'd an act
Of heroiſm (recorded be the fact!)
Which might have grac'd great Philip's warlike ſon,
Or from the mighty Cæſar laurels won.
What man elſe dar'd? ye Powers! was't not enough
To take away the chain from JAMIE DUFF!—
T—T—R, for ſhame! you ſhou'd have ta'en his head,
Of it I'm ſure you ſtood in greater need.

But ſtill to ſterling merit ever true,
The Muſe will pay that tribute which is due.
Among theſe hireling ſlaves there have been found
Yet honeſt men, who ſtand on Freedom's ground;
Long had we wiſh'd that ſuch men might revive,
To keep expiring honeſty alive;
The wiſh was heard above—P——IE we ſee!
HAMPDEN, long dead, again revives in thee.
KIN——H and S——T the Muſe's thanks receive,
For gallantly of late they did behave;
Scorn'd all the bribes, withſtood falſe S—MP—N's ſmiles,
Shun'd his vile arts, and baffl'd all his wiles.
Long may their honour unimpair'd remain,
Unhurt by ſlander's tongue, and free from ſtain.—

Thus

Thus far of them—the reſt are filthy traſh,
Clo'cina's breed, beneath the Muſe's laſh;
Of brutes like them aſham'd, ſhe takes no heed,
They're perfect *logs, things quite in nature dead.*

Next in my view, behind this venal ſet,
Comes their patron, the gouty Baronet;
O for a pen that could record his name
For ever down to everlaſting ſhame!
Who can forget, if he was then alive,
The v——n's conduct in the forty-five!
Who does not know his many, many cheats!
How he defrauded by his horrid threats
Th' induſtrious farmers; begging for their own,
He'd call them *rebels*, bid them quick begone;
Adding withal, that if they did perſiſt,
He'd hang them up; "ſuch rogues could not be miſs'd."
Curſ'd be the man who dar'd be ſo unjuſt
As uſe ſuch means to falſify his truſt!
But what was this to him! mark'd out by fate
For greater deeds—the ruin of the ſtate.—
Let us but view him on another ſhore,
We'll find him blacker than he was before;

Who but himſelf could ever have withſtood
The deſp'rate rage of armies lacking food?
Who from humanity could ſo have ſwerv'd?
Three tedious days had nations' armies ſtarv'd
By his foul means! and yet the monſter lives,
In ſplendor lives! the very firſt of thieves!
At home he ſits, hoping, as heretofore,
The time may come, and he may plunder more.

Gods! with what hate, what perfect mortal hate,
My breaſt is fill'd! when minions of the State,——
With their own minions leagu'd, deſpiſe the laws
Meant to protect, not injure, freedom's cauſe.
Have we not ſeen of late (ſhame to be told!)
This great man buying perjury for gold?
Letters we've ſeen too giving ſtrict command
To ſcatter brib'ry largely through the land;
To leave no means untried, uſe ev'ry art
That could be us'd, to touch the corrupt heart.
For theſe vile ends (but Heav'n oft-times prevents
All wicked purpoſes, all baſe intents)
H—T was pick't out, a man of little ſkill
In any thing, but willing to do ill.—

Alas,

Alas, poor H—T! it made me bluſh, I own,
To ſee thee walk in crouded ſtreets alone;
On the election day to ſee you ſtand,
And not a knave to take you by the hand;
'Twas ſomewhat hard to bear vile S—MP—N's frown,
His killing looks, enough to ſink you down.
But never mind, let them ſay all they can;
Upon the whole, "The maſter's the worſt man."
Nay ten times worſe; for in the blaſted train
Of his vile crimes, rapine and m—d—r reign.

Search antient hiſtories of antient times,
Thro' various regions, and thro' various climes,
Conſult records, it quickly will appear,
Wherever miſchief is, a parſon's there—
At home we find—W—S—R! ('tis ſtrictly true)
This obſervation verified in you,—

Oft have we read, that wolves to catch their prey
Would dreſs like ſheep, and lead whole flocks aſtray,
Whilſt they, poor things! not knowing their ſad fate,
Walk'd heedleſs on, repenting when too late—
Juſt ſo this prieſt of Belial (ſhame to tell!
For which repentance ſcarce can ſave from H—ll),

With

With ſilken ſmiles and hypocritic air,
Enough to catch the Devil in his ſnare,
Drew on a ſilly woman to defraud
Her legal heirs, and leave him all ſhe had.—
Shame! that religion's cloak, by CHRIST ordain'd
The badge of uprightneſs, ſhould thus be ſtain'd!—
His brain, quite fraught with ſchemes, and wond'rous ſage,
Ready to plan a *church* or plan a *ſtage*,
Has brought more debt upon the city's head
Than ever can, or ever will be paid.—
Whene'er we hear this praying, canting prieſt
Propoſe a *public ſcheme*, he means *a feaſt*.
Oft does he offer up at Bacchus' ſhrine,
In large potations, gen'rous claret wine.
Much does the *gratis* banquet glad his ſoul,
The guſty viands, and the flowing bowl.
This rev'rend r——e alone (what man would think?)
Has coſt the town ſix thouſand pounds for drink*!
His outward face is fair, his ſoul within
Is full of guilt, ſunk down with ſecret ſin.—

EDINA's

* This ſum has been called much more; however, that the Author may err on the ſafe ſide, he ſtates it at Six Thouſand Pounds; but it is daily encreaſing ſo faſt, that it is hard to ſay where it may end.—It has been ſaid (and I believe with ſome truth), that he has drank more claret than would float a firſt rate man of war.

EDINA's ſons, for ſhame! ſhall men like theſe
Still play the deſpots, rule us as they pleaſe?
Forbid it Heav'n; let us pluck up a ſoul,
Change the curs'd ſet, and inſtant get a poll!
Drive out the Knight, and let EDINA be,
As heretofore, in ſtricteſt meaning free!—
May ye pick out a choice, a faithful band,
Men independent, who will ever ſtand
Betwixt the city and oppreſſion's hand!—
But ſhould the preſent venal herd remain,
What man of character would wear a chain?
E'en I, tho' very poor, would yet be ſorry
To wear the robe was ever wore by L—R—E.

Have done, my Muſe, nor more defile your pen
With ſuch mean things, find beings more like men.

POSTSCRIPTUM.

An ADDRESS to HOSPITAL ROBBERS and PLUNDERERS of the POOR.

YE who affect the pleaſant path to h—ll,
And love d———n, for its cauſes, well,
Look ſtreight before you on your journey's end,
Do ye not ſee th' infernal ſmoke aſcend?
Have not ſome ſparks into your boſoms flown,
Whereby the neighb'ring coaſts may well be known?
Bold ſinners, ſtop! no further progreſs make,
Leſt your next ſtep be in the fiery lake.—
But oh! they ridicule their ſoul's affairs,
And labour to be d——d at unawares.—
And much I fear they never will awake,
'Till once they're plung'd into the burning lake

The rich knave thinks that he muſt never die,
Unleſs his minions and falſe prophets lie;
He's ſafe, if death be caſt as far behind
His body, as it is below his mind.—

He's

He's always young; he learns it from his glaſs,
Which ſmooths his furrow'd brow and wrinkl'd face;
But a cold wither'd hand confutes the lie,
Down falls his flatt'ring glaſs—his fancies die.—
His garden-walks muſt him no longer know,
The life-tree in his garden does not grow;
His *palace* muſt be chang'd for the dark *tomb*;
That was his inn, but *this* muſt be his home;
No longer muſt he at his table ſtay,
The VOIDER (Death) now comes to fetch away;
He makes amaſing breaches, and, in ſhort,
Has ſeiz'd the outwarks, now attacks the fort.—
In what a wretched poſture does he lie?
He cannot live, and yet he dares not die.
His corpſe muſt be diſtrain'd; for he'll not pay,
Nor yield his ghoſt; it muſt be dragg'd away;
And when the hour of diſſolution's come,
Out flies the ſoul to hear its final doom.—

Ye who have ſlightly heard the fun'ral knell,
Now hear the voice which dooms your ſouls to h—ll!
For ſome whoſe hearts an earthquake ſcarce can ſhake
At Heav'n's loud roaring thunder may awake.

L——

L—— and W———'s ghosts in sad despair
Are from their prisons snatch'd t' attend the bar;
Behind them the impatient devils roar,
Their crimes (the worst of devils) stand before;
With terror thus besieg'd in ev'ry place,
They hear a voice, but must not see the face;
A voice like roaring thunder in their ears,
The words like tearing bolts, and flaming spears—
"Begone accurs'd, vile caitiffs! hence away
"To d——d ghosts—come devils take your prey,"
Th' ingenious tyrants quick a council pack;
Their malice set their wits upon the rack;
When they had jointly studied to torment,
For their pale prisoners in haste they sent;
They chain and stake them to a furious flame,
Where constant streams of brimstone feed the same;
Behold sin's martyrs, and h—ll's sacrifice,
They yell and howl, and vent unpitied cries.—
They find no friendly ear or tender eye,
They feel ten thousand deaths, but cannot die;
Like molten brass they're fir'd in ev'ry part,
A vulture lives upon each living heart.—

Insatiate plunderers! in time give o'er,
This is the fate of all who wrong the Poor.

4 JU62

FINIS.